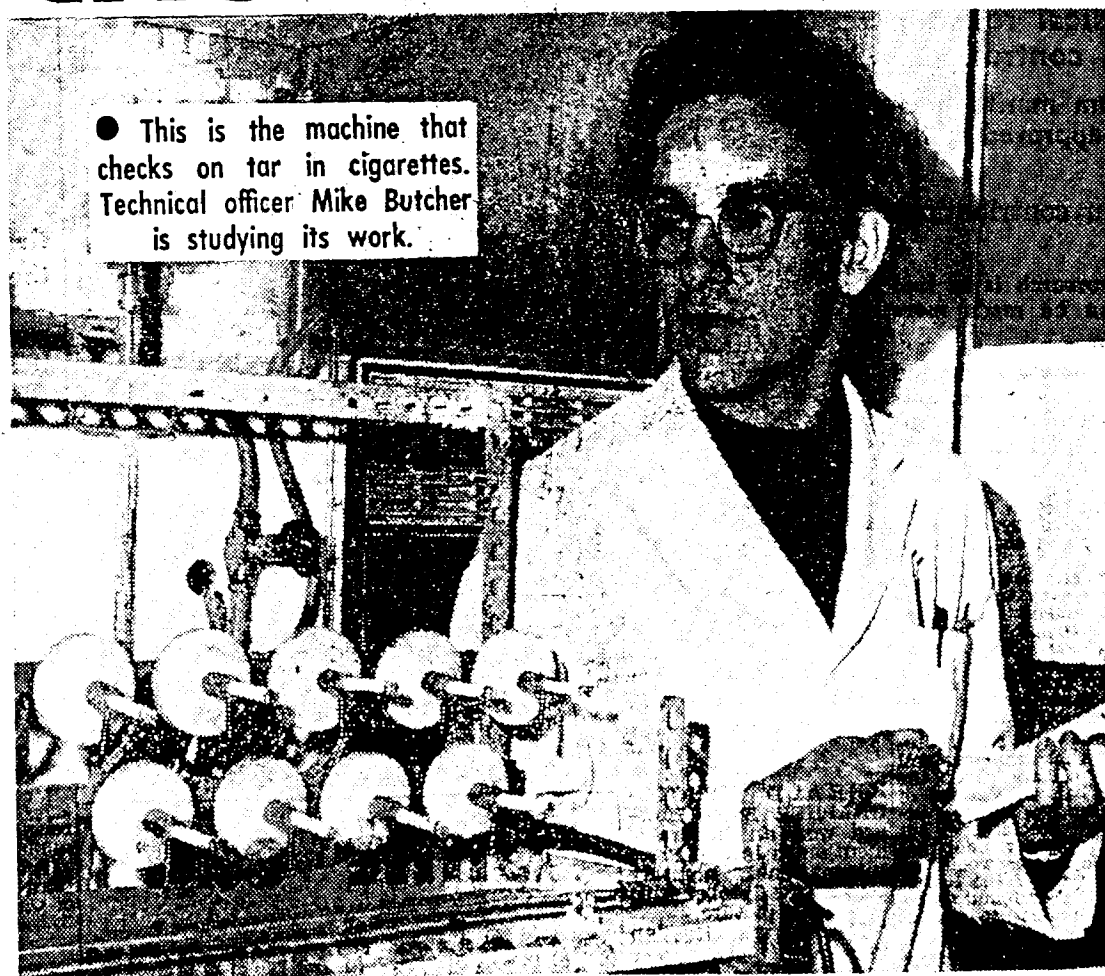


Date 15 April 1968

Lynch Pidler Associates
Box 4276, G.P.O., Sydney.

Here's a filter that tames the killer tar



1002403302

IT looked like a filter any smoker would give his right lung for . . .

Not one particle of tar got through.

It's called Millipore, comes from America, and costs 2½ cents.

It lasts through five cigarettes.

By MAX GRANT

But you probably won't be game to be seen smoking with one in the street.

It's the size of a 50 cent piece and needs a holder the size — and look — of a baby's dummy.

"And in any case," says John Swan, "it would make cigarette smoking taste like sucking through a straw."

John M. Swan is Pro-

fessor of Organic Chemistry at Monash University.

He and his colleagues were responsible for the analysis of 13 cigarette brands which formed the basis of the Anti-Cancer Council's recent demand for compulsory labelling of tar levels on cigarette packets and in advertisements.

Monash University's smoking machine puffed away — through Millipore filters — at 100 of each brand, bought at random throughout Australia, to give these tar content results:

Hallmark Myria filter (7.1 milligrams per cigarette), Ransom (7.4), Hallmark charcoal filter (14.9), Kent (18.0), Alpine (18.8), Escort (20.3), Albany (20.4), Camel plain (23.7), Belvedere (25.1), Kool (25.2), Rothmans plain (26.3), Craven A plain (26.5) and Philip Morris regular (32.3).

Is tar content all important?

'No doubt'

"There's really no doubt about it," Professor Swan said with evangelistic fervour.

He is in his early 40s, quietly spoken and normally doesn't like to talk about himself.

"One in 10 heavy smokers will die of lung cancer, and the tar is the main known agent that leads to it."

"The smoke you see curling up from a cigarette is basically light reflected from tar particles."

"But even to sift out tar may not be enough."

"There are gases present in smoke, too —

gases which when tested at higher concentrations can be shown to be very toxic.

"We want to do some more work on this, along with chemical analysis of other Australian brands," Professor Swan said.

What hope has the heavy smoker of getting a safe filter?

"Designing filters is really not my business," Professor Swan said.

"I doubt if the Millipore filter could be built into a cigarette."

"Scaling it down could make it ineffective."

Size, shape

"Size and shape of the cigarette, type of paper, grade and cut of tobacco — even the fertiliser used on the tobacco plant — all play a role."

"It's a very complex problem of applied chemistry."

Yet Professor Swan, always a non-smoker, is sympathetic to the other half.

"If people must smoke — and about 50% of 20-year-olds still start — we have to give them a low tar cigarette and encourage them to use it so that their chances of death from lung cancer become no greater than, say, death in a car accident."

"This will need determined Government action such as:

- "Labelling, in big letters, of tar content on cigarette packets.
- "Imposing heavy excise duties on high tar brands so they cost more.
- "Setting up a Federal Government laboratory to check all brands regularly.
- "Smoking, after all, is not a habit. It is a drug addiction.
- "And drug addicts need help."

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